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Aerospace Section

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AEROSPACE SECTION OF THE ENGINEERING DIVISION

The Aerospace Section of the Engineering Division encourages communication and cooperation among information professionals concerned with aerospace, aeronautical and related technologies. In addition, it fosters dialog with entities such as NASA, the AIAA and other important sources of technical data and bibliographical services.

FROM THE CHAIR

THOMAS DE PETRO

Committees: The George Mandel Award Committee and the Nominations Committee

The two committees that are formed each year provide opportunities both to serve and to learn more about the workings of our section. They also are good venues for networking and getting to know one another.

The George Mandel Award Committee is chaired this year by Eileen Dorschner of MIT, who is also the section chair-elect. Past section chair Susan Winstanley (formerly Lamanna) posted the current criteria on the Web. The link to the George Mandel Award, sponsored by Faxon and currently \$1,000 in value, is at the top of the Section Board page at http://www.sla.org/division/deng/aerospace_board.html. With the current selection process completed, it is not too early to look at the page and begin thinking about nominations for next year. The Nominations Committee is charged with filling the chair-elect position. Both committees will announce their winners at the section breakfast business meeting at the SLA annual conference this June, where we will also recruit new committee members. Anyone interested in the "committee experience" can contact me (tdp@tamu.edu) or Eileen (edorsch@mit.edu).

As a section of the Engineering Division, the Aerospace Section is listed on the division Web page at <http://www.sla.org/division/deng/engdiv.html>. The site has many useful links, including those to descriptions of the Division's INSPEC \$500 student travel stipend award and the Ei Engineering Information SLA Engineering Librarian award. Both awards are administered by the Engineer-

ing Division Awards Committee.

Awards, Meetings, and Just a Little Etiquette

Although the work of all these committees may seem a bit complex or perhaps even formal or bureaucratic, all their endeavors have definite purposes and benefits. Recognizing those who achieve and serve is important in SLA, as the efforts of those who are nominated and ultimately win can benefit everyone. The Association, the Division, and the Section would definitely have high achievers without the awards, but such recognition adds a certain dimension to our experience as members and to the Association's growth. Sponsors make the awards possible, and here is an etiquette tip on showing them we really appreciate them: If awards are to be given during an annual conference business meeting after a meal, present them first before business is conducted. The sponsors often have booths to staff, calls to make, etc. and will appreciate the extra free time if they can leave after bestowing the award. I recall one meeting where very contentious business was conducted before the awards, which was awkward for the sponsors as they waited to make their presentations. A little etiquette in the agenda will go a long way.

Aerospace and the Internet

Where does one start the process of navigating the two more effectively and efficiently? If I had the perfect answer I would certainly convey it. But this is a question we can ask ourselves as we look for better ways to share knowledge with one another. The Annual Conference and this space can provide forums for exchanging ideas and experiences in accessing aerospace information more effectively.

Last year I was one of a group of SLA members asked to contribute sections to the forthcoming fifth edition of the Transportation Division bibliography, which will be published online. In Part Two, "Air Transportation," my section on aircraft will include the Web sites with which I am most familiar. Several of those sites also appear in my re-

cent library subject guide for aerospace engineering on the Texas A&M Libraries Web pages (<http://library.tamu.edu/se/subj-guides/Engr-A/aero.htm>). Such a guide is not exhaustive. It was created specifically for university students, faculty, and staff to begin research with the information sources immediately available to them. It can, however, serve as a starting point. Perhaps other section members know of noteworthy sites that group aerospace information links. Please share them with me and I can list them in the next issue, in my fourth and final column as chair. Some of them could even possibly be shared with the author of the new book described in the following paragraph.

Information—and Humor

Another starting point for Web sites is the latest (“fourth edition, bigger and better”) *Aviation Internet Directory: A Guide to 500 Best Aviation Web Sites* by John A. Merry (2001, New York: McGraw-Hill, \$24.95, ISBN 0-07-1372164, paperback). Some section members may recall the previous edition published in 1999 as *300 Best Aviation Web Sites (And 100 More Worth Bookmarking)*. Mr.

Merry has a sense of both humor and information, making his book a welcome addition to any library, preferably on the ready reference shelf by the desk. Unfortunately, his sense of indexing is limited. It would be great if future editions listed all the sites alphabetically in the index, which currently contains only keywords. The book does list his Web site for updates, which is actually a link from the book’s main site at <http://www.bestaviationwebsites.com>. That page includes a “Feedback” link for e-mail comments, where I shared both praises and suggestions.

Contact

If you have questions or comments on the committees, Web sites, or book, or just something you want to share with the section, please let me know. You can contact me at tdp@tamu.edu or phone 979-862-1901 with your ideas or suggestions. Meanwhile, plan on attending the SLA Annual Conference in Los Angeles in June. It provides the best interface there is—the real-time, in-person human one with our fellow members, guests, presenters, and sponsors.

The Aerospace Division welcomes the following new member:

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